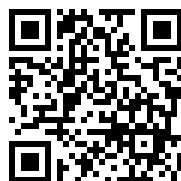

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16 June, 1885.



REPLY

TO

MON. R. W. THOMPSON,

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,

ADDRESSED

TO THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE,

BY

F. X. WENINGER, D. D.,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

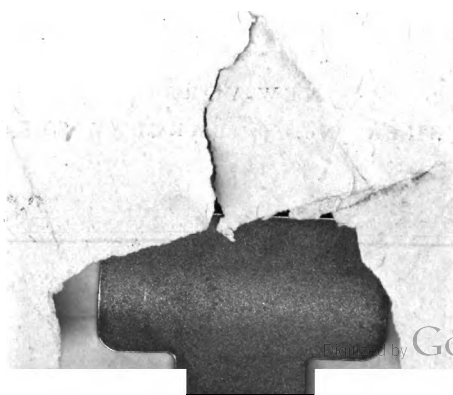


NEW-YORK:

P. O'SHEA, No. 37 BARCLAY STREET.

1877.





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List of
Genl. G. S. ...
of Boston.

REPLY

TO

MR. THOMPSON.

LAST year, during the Presidential canvass a book, appeared, written by a member of the Know-Nothing Brotherhood, entitled "The Papacy and the Civil Power." I paid little attention to it then; but as the author has since been called to a high office and made a member of the Cabinet, some exterior importance was given to the book, and, therefore, on my return from a Missionary expedition in Texas, a few weeks ago, I was told that a reply from me was expected. I accept the task, because Mr. Thompson, the present Secretary of the Navy, has chosen, as a target for his attacks on the attitude of the Catholic Church in the United States, two books of which I am author.

He considers me as one of the champions to execute the evil designs of the Catholic clergy and peo-

ple, to undermine the Republican institutions of the country. As this is a vital and far-reaching accusation, I owe my fellow-citizens some explanation.

The title of one of my books is :

“Catholicity, Protestantism and Infidelity.”

The title of the other, is:

“On the Apostolical and Infallible Authority of the Pope when Teaching the Faithful, and on His Relation to a General Council.”

It is not my intention to review and refute the innumerable errors and misstatements contained in Mr. Thompson's book, which fill up the greater part of its 750 pages.

I will confine myself to the attacks which he has been pleased to make on me ; and even here I will be as brief as possible. But brief as I shall be, I hope to break the point of every lance which he has aimed at me, or rather at the truths, which I have the honor of defending, and in doing so, every impartial reader will see that I have completely crushed to nought the argument of his book.

I.

Mr. Thompson against the Catholic Church and against my Book : Catholicity, Protestantism and Infidelity.

This Book of mine appeared first, in the year 1862, under the title of "Protestantism and Infidelity."

Mr. Thompson finds the title offensive, and I acknowledge that it was defective.

But why does he not mention, that, in the following editions—the book having now, besides its editions in German, French and Italian, more than twenty-two English editions—the title reads "Catholicity, Protestantism and Infidelity?"

My aim in publishing this book was simply to induce the American people to examine, in a fair and unprejudiced way, which of the great sections of religious belief or disbelief in this country can best justify its claims to their assent and acceptance : Catholicity, Protestantism or Infidelity.

Mr. Thompson asserts, that my intention in publishing this book, was rather to address the members of the Catholic Church itself, with the design of stimulating them to renewed activity in their exertions to

repress and exterminate Protestantism, and with it free institutions in this country.

He goes so far as to see my movement in the year 1862, skillfully connected with the plan of Napoleon III, to place an Imperial prince on the Throne of Mexico ; to which I have only one word to say in reply : "*Nonsense.*"

The whole plan of the work shows that it was written for the purpose of removing from the eyes of Protestants the veil, which, for three hundred years, the fallacies of their teachers and the prejudices of education had been forming.

Listen, for a moment, to my explanation of this plan, and you will fully agree that I am right, and that my opponent is wrong in his statements.

In reviewing the points controverted between Protestants and the Catholic Church, I was struck by the observation that, from the first to the last, the doctrines of the Catholic Church, abstracting from their character of divinely revealed truths, and regarding them in themselves only, are exceedingly consoling ; while on the contrary the denials of those dogmas, on the part of Protestantism, are saddening and disheartening.

In order to prove this assertion, I reviewed and compared, in the first chapter of the book, all the leading controverted points, beginning with the doc-

trine of the Fall of Man, under the following headings:

The Primitive Condition of Man and the Fall—The Redemption—The Church—The Means of Salvation—Baptism—Confirmation—The Eucharist—Penance Indulgences—Extreme Unction—Holy Orders—Matrimony—Good Works—Purgatory—The Communion of Saints.

To show how I endeavored to bring out the respective characters of Catholic and Protestant Doctrine, I will refer here, only as a specimen, to the two last dogmas.

The Catholic Church teaches that, besides Heaven and Hell, there is a place in a future life called Purgatory, where souls can yet be cleansed from their imperfections, venial sins, and minor faults of human frailty. Is this not consoling?

Protestantism denies it, and admits only Heaven and Hell; and, as nothing defiled can enter Heaven, according to Holy Writ, you must, as logical Protestants, send men to Hell for every trifle of moral imperfection. Is not this harsh and saddening?

The Catholic Church teaches that there exists a communion between us and those who have departed from this life; that we can help them by our prayers, if they are not entirely purified, to enter Heaven; and that, on the other hand, those in Heaven are

in sympathy with us, and pray for us, because they love us. Is not this consoling?

Protestantism, on the contrary, denies all this, and breaks up the consoling union of the children of God. The dead are dead! This is the climax of the cold and chilling denial of Protestantism. Is not this disheartening? This being the case in regard to all the other points of controverted dogmas, am I not allowed to say of Protestant theology: "It is a religion of distress?"

I did not fail to make a wide distinction between the Protestants of to-day and the first Reformers, whom I hold to be worthy of reprobation for their principles and their conduct. I emphatically declared my conviction that many are Protestants now, more in name than in reality, more by education and force of family tradition, than by their own deliberate rejection of the truth. I still believe that the great majority of Protestants in this country neither approve nor share the vulgar blasphemies of Luther, nor the impious tenets of Calvin, nor the cruel fanaticism of Knox, nor the ambition; pride and sensuality of other reformers. It was chiefly the genuine nobility and the honest candor of the American character, that induced me to address my book to the people of the United States on this most momentous subject.

If my readers have never examined the doctrines

of the first reformers on "Free Will," "Total Depravity," "Predestination to Hell," I beg leave to offer them a few specimens of those teachings which have revolted the good sense of so many modern Protestants.

It is well known that the first of all the reformers was Luther, and that his teaching gave birth and shape to Protestant theology. Now Luther wrote a work entitled "*De Servo Arbitrio*," on "Slave Will," in which he labors to prove, that by the fall of Adam, man lost his free will, and that whatever he does, he does by irresistible impulse, according as God or Satan overpowers his will.

The original and elegant comparison he makes use of, to illustrate his point is generally known : he compares the will of man after the fall to—an ass. "If God rides him," says Luther, "He drives him whithersoever He will, to do good ; if the devil rides him, he drives him as he wishes. Whatever happens, happens necessarily, though to us it may appear to be done freely."

According to Luther's teaching, in his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, the ten commandments are not binding on the Christian conscience, in which Christ reigns by His grace. He calls Catholic theologians fools for maintaining that Christ abrogated only the ceremonies of the old law, not the com-

mandments. He compares the faithful soul to Isaac and Abraham on the mount, who did not trouble themselves with what the mule of the flesh might do in the valley.

Melanchthon, the faithful interpreter of the doctrines of Luther, his master, calls the dogma of free will, "a slanderous doctrine which has gradually insinuated itself into Christianity, and originated with the heathen." "Man," he says, "can of himself do nothing but sin, just as fire burns and the magnet attracts iron. To assert the contrary is "Pelagian heresy."*

Calvin repeats the same doctrine: "Everything in man after his fall is sin." The virtues of the heathens, such as those of Socrates or Zeno, were only splendid crimes. Calvin goes further yet and says: "We call predestination the eternal decree of God, by which some are appointed for eternal salvation, others for eternal damnation." He adds, "that God permits those who are predestined to eternal damnation, to do some good in this life, but only to make them the more guilty and punish them the more severely in eternity."†

* Quenstedt Theol. Didact. Polem. Part. II, Wittenberg, 1669. Cf. Belarm. De Statu Protop.; and Luther, Com. 3, in Gen. Luth. Expos. Ep. ad Gal. Luther Adv. Erasm. Rotterdam. Melanchthon Soc. Theol. p. 19. 122.

† Calvin Inst., lib. ii, cap. 1 et 2; lib. i, cap. 184; lib. iii, cap. 24, § 4 and 8.

This doctrine is not peculiar to the chiefs of the Reformation, but passed into the doctrinal writings of the early Protestants. The most important among the early Protestant doctrinal writings is the formula of Concord, or "Solida Declaratio" of the year 1577.

The Swiss, Belgian and Scottish confessions of Faith, contain in substance the very same doctrine. They do not in express terms go so far as Luther, Melancthon, Calvin and Zwinglius, but they proceed far enough to imply the whole doctrine by logical sequence. Even in our time and country, have we not entire Protestant denominations, that believe in *absolute predestination*—which evidently denies free will?

I could continue my quotations at great length, but I have to keep my promise and be brief. If you wish to know more of them, read my book.

I have only to prove to the Protestant reader of these pages that it was unfair on the part of Mr. Thompson to place before his readers only the headings of the chapters of my book, without any reference to what was said in them to substantiate my accusation against the innate and radical tendency of Protestantism *as such*.

But you may object: What have we to do with Luther, Melancthon, Calvin and others whom our English ancestors followed?

I grant that you may have little or nothing to do with them. But have I not a right to draw your attention to the conclusion, that a religion which in its very origin proposed such views, must appear exceedingly suspicious, and raise in our mind the well-founded presumption that to adopt such a religion in exchange for the consoling and sanctifying Faith of their fore-fathers, was not the consequence of examination, but of passion?

The presumption becomes evidence, when you reflect on the commentary which the lives of the Reformers furnish on their teaching. What violent passions in those men! Remember especially the *Coryphæi* of the Reformation in England, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth, his adulterous daughter; and for that purpose read the history of "the Protestant Reformation in England," by Wm. Cobbett, the English Protestant, who says: "Historians have been divided in opinion as to which was the worst man that England ever produced—Henry or Cranmer; but all mankind must agree that Elizabeth was the worst woman that ever existed in England, or in the whole world—Jezabel not excepted."^{*} Remember that this was written by an English Protestant, to whom Englishmen have reared a monument.

^{*} Cobbett's Hist. of the Prot. Reform., Letter XI, No. 348.

Americans! How is it, then, that so many of you are yet Protestants, though you all with me abhor such abominations? History answers: It is because English Protestants forced Protestantism on your ancestors. You have thrown off the political yoke of England—you owe it to your love of truth and independence to determine your own course also in regard to religion. If you decline to do so, you are not in earnest to know the truth.

I venture to offer only one test of your sincere desire for the truth, and that test concerns the Rule of Faith, which is discussed in the *second chapter* of my book.

The Protestant Rule of Faith—as all the world knows—is the Bible, as understood by the reader according to his private judgment.

The Rule of Faith in the Catholic Church is the teaching of that authority which Christ established in his Church as a commissioned body—a teaching authority, invested with infallibility.

That Christ did establish a living authority to teach, is abundantly proved by passages of Holy Scripture itself.

Christ positively and most solemnly declared: "As the Father has sent Me, I send you. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and

behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." "He who hears you, hears me." And when the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, shall come, whom the Father shall send you in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you." "I send you the spirit of truth," and "I shall ask the Father that He may abide with you forever."* Especially remember the most solemn declaration of Christ in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew: "Peter, thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it."†

How can Protestants believe in Christ and His promises, contained in the Bible, and yet justify a separation from that Church, which they must admit to be the first in time, and which they themselves call the old and Mother Church? Christ positively affirmed that the gates of Hell should never prevail against that Church, which He built upon Peter, and that He would remain with that first Church "all days, even unto the consummation of the world." These are the concluding words of the Gospel of St. Matthew.

If Christ is God, His promise is Divine. It will

* Matt. 28; Luke 10, 16; John 14, 16.

† Matt. xvi.

endure unto the consummation of the world ; and so, likewise, will the Primitive Church. Neither man, nor devil, nor angel, could or can corrupt or change her. If all the crimes ever imputed to Popes, Bishops and Priests were as true as most of them are false, they would not furnish the shadow of an argument against the legitimacy of the first and oldest Church. If all of them had been devils incarnate, not one of them, nor all of them together, could have corrupted the Church ; because Christ has not instituted her for them alone, but for all men, and for the salvation of men in all ages. As well might they expect to change the universe. Men are free to use or abuse the powers of nature, but they cannot change them. So men are free to use or to abuse the means of grace entrusted to the Church by her Founder, but they can no more alter the Church and its means of grace than they can alter the course of the sun and moon.

Therefore, St. Chrysostom, in the fourth century, rightly said: "Before you think of changing the Church, change the sun, moon and stars ; much sooner will you succeed in destroying the light of the sun, than in weakening the Church."

Indeed, if Christ established His Church, as He certainly did, to be a teaching authority, invested with Infallibility, to teach in His name in all matters of faith and morals, promising that this living author-

ity should not fail ; and if the Catholic Church, by undeniable historical evidence, is the oldest Christian Church ; she is consequently the Church of Christ, and men have a Rule of Faith given them with all the qualities which such a rule must possess.

The qualities of the Rule of Faith are : To be as old as Faith itself—To be clear to everybody—complete—universal—accessible to every one, and capable of settling every dispute.

Now, the Rule of Faith of Protestants, viz. : The Bible according to their private interpretation, lacks all those qualities. On this point, it will suffice here to put to my Protestant readers only this question : Can you really imagine that God in His infinite wisdom, would give, as a Rule of Faith, to men, the great majority of whom could not read at all, a book written in an obsolete tongue, in a style difficult even to the best scholars ?

Would you really think it wise to place in your court-houses, instead of commissioned judges, a book written in Hebrew, Greek and Chaldaic, to settle all your legal affairs ?

Why, then, should Protestants feel so repugnant to adopt the Catholic Rule of Faith, which commends itself to reason and common sense ?

The real *cause* of their repugnance are their *prejudices*.

To this subject I devoted the *third chapter* of my book, dividing them into religious and political prejudices.

The headings of the first class are: The Pope—The Clergy—Confession—Indulgences—The Bible—The Saints—Mary—Celibacy—Holy Mass—Communion—Use of the Latin Language in the Divine Service—Ceremonies—Abstinence—Exclusive Salvation.

The headings of the second class are: Allegiance—The Inquisition—Despotism—Civilization—Morality—The Sabbath—The Sovereignty of the Pope and his Civil Government—Republicanism—Freedom of Discussion.

It is incredible how many well-meaning people are the victims of traditional and stereotyped misrepresentations on these subjects. Listen to Judge Burnet, in his book, "The Path which led a Protestant Lawyer to the Catholic Church":

"The system of misrepresentation of Catholic doctrines, practices, and intentions, so general among Protestant writers, gave rise in my mind to various serious questions: Why did success originally require such a line of argument? Why did truth require such a support? And why is it still necessary? Is misrepresentation better in a good cause than candor and truth?"

Mr. Thompson himself is one of these unfortunate victims of unreasoning prejudice.

He charges the Church with being especially inimical to *Civilization* and to *Republican Institutions*.

Let us see with what right he makes these grave accusations.

First. In regard to modern progress or civilization, suppose for the sake of argument, that all modern civilization sprang from Protestantism, like Minerva from the head of Jove, what argument would this furnish against the claims of the Catholic Church to be the only true Church of Christ? As Mr. Baine justly remarks: "There is no relation of cause and effect between a magnificent iron-foundry and a divine revelation; and what consequences exist in, what facts may flow from, what moral or divine truths there may be connected with a spinning-jenny, is not perceived." Did Christ come to teach men the arts of commerce, to render them skillful money-makers, to train them in the construction of railroads, steamboats and cotton factories, to make them rich here, or to save them for eternity?

But to accuse the Church, as Mr. Thompson does, of being inimical to civilization, is a glaring calumny refuted by all history.

What would Europe be to-day without the civilizing influence of the Catholic Church? Little better

than a wilderness overrun by the rude descendants of Northern Barbarians. The Catholic Church civilized the Huns, Goths, Lombards, Franks, Saxons, the ancestors of all the modern European nations. Even men like Voltaire and Montesquieu do not question this fact.

By the side of this immense result of Catholic influence, you cannot name a single nation reclaimed by Protestantism, from barbarism or the savage state. As a well-known writer says: "Not a man in Europe or America now, who talks bravely against the Church, but owes it to the Church that he can talk at all." If Mr. Thompson is better off than his barbarian ancestors, he owes it to the old Church, which he now ungratefully calumniates.

Now looking to America itself: In South and Central America, every Indian tribe that was civilized, and there were many, received its civilization from Catholic Missionaries. In North America, Catholic Missionaries civilized more than one Indian tribe. You can not have already forgotten the work done in our own times, by the illustrious Father De Smet. Protestantism could only drive them to the Western prairies and to the Rocky Mountains, and starve or slay them. Give that support to Catholic Missionaries to-day, which you give to Methodists, and the result for the advance of civilization among the In-

dians would be incalculably greater, because Catholic Missionaries would use the money for the benefit of the Indians, and not to enrich themselves.

In science, art, inventions and discoveries, Catholic nations do not yield the palm to Protestant countries. On the contrary, it is an historical fact that the most important discoveries in every branch of art, science and industry, were in great measure made by Catholics.

If a Copernicus had never appeared in the world, it is very doubtful whether a Newton would ever have been known. Every library in the world contains innumerable and immortal monuments of Catholic genius.

Europe is enriched with masterpieces of Catholic architecture, sculpture and painting. France and Belgium are Catholic countries, and certainly not behind their Protestant neighbors in civilization. Look at Munich, and above all at Rome itself.

Nay, remember Philadelphia and the World's Exposition. At your Centennial, Catholics had no reason to fear a comparison with Protestant nations. In more than one department, they were decidedly ahead. How backward, even in this century, was Prussia, now the leading Protestant power. The United States of America is the land which, in latter times, has best understood how to make the most practical use of the results of modern progress for the promotion

of the temporal welfare of its inhabitants. It has given to its citizens the blessings of political freedom. What she needs is that the material progress of her people may serve them as a means to attain salvation, and to extend the Kingdom of God ; and further, that the political freedom in which the United States so deservedly glory, be truly what it pretends to be, and not based upon a false foundation.

Christ says : "If the Son frees you, you are truly free." This, however, can be done only through the influence of the true Church of Christ, upon which He has bestowed the means to loosen the chains of error and the bonds of sin.

The other Prejudice which Mr. Thompson seeks to strengthen in the minds of his fellow-citizens, is contained in the assertion, that the Catholic Church is inimical to the free institutions of the Republic, and is in close alliance with princely powers to crush the liberty of the people.

What an absurd accusation! How can any man who has read history, dare to make it!

The very name and aim of the Catholic Church, her foundation, growth, and entire history, contradict this assertion.

The Catholic Church, as her name indicates, claims to be the Church established by Christ for all man-

kind, for all the people of the earth, for all nations. not for princes only.

The Apostles in fulfilling their mission, first of all addressed the people, not the princes. Formed at Pentecost by the converted people, the Church grew up over the whole globe, not protected by princes, kings and emperors, but rather in spite of their most violent resistance and persecution. Princes drew the sword against the Apostles themselves and did not sheathe it for three hundred years.

In the first three centuries, seventeen millions of Christians, who were all Catholics, were the victims of princely or imperial cruelty.

Even after the conversion of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, the Church, though no longer openly persecuted, suffered perhaps more from the arrogance, usurpation, and pretended protection of princes, than she had from their open violence. Already under the tyranny of the sons of Constantine, the Church had reason to bewail her lot, and her struggle with princes has continued through all the centuries down to our day.

Judge Baine, in his book "On the Harmonious Relations between Divine Faith and Rational or Natural Religion," appealing to the evidence of historical facts, says: "We affirm that whenever the rights and liberties of any people, for fifteen hundred years,

have been in jeopardy, by tyranny from any quarter where the Church has had any influence, she exerted it on behalf of the oppressed and down-trodden, and in favor of liberty, and against tyranny."

Remember especially her struggles with the German emperors, and with the rulers of England.

If the accusations, that the Catholic Church is hostile to civil freedom, is founded on historical facts, nothing can be easier than to specify in what age, in what nation, under what circumstances the Catholic Church destroyed democratic forms of government. There is a little Republic in Italy, San Marino, the oldest of all existing Republics, and the most unflinching and uncompromising advocate of republican principles. That Republic, which has enjoyed its independence for thirteen hundred years, is and always has been Catholic, and has been for centuries under the protection of the Popes.

Venice was a Republic before anybody dreamed of the United States.

In our own times the Church, persecuted by kings and emperors, looks for help, not to monarchs, but to republics—to France for protection, to the United States for hospitality.

Judge Baine again calls your attention to the fact that the noblest charter of human rights, that the world has ever seen wrested from tyranny, within eighteen

hundred years, was forced from a despot by the genius, courage, and learning of Catholics, under the auspices and encouragement of their spiritual mother the Church. We mean the renowned "Magna Charta," wrung from King John, by the Catholic Barons of England. *Stephen Langton the Abp of Canterbury. And annulled by Pope Innocent.*

In the American Constitution itself, every principle of liberty which it proclaims, is transcribed in substance, and almost in so many words, from the Catholic Charter of Human Rights.

All this Mr. Thompson does not know, or pretends to ignore, as a professed Know-Nothing. He wishes Americans to look upon the Catholic Church as a foreign institution intruding herself upon American soil.

I propose to give him some information which he should have gathered for himself before he ventured to write a book, which is now remarkable only for its reckless assertions and illogical deductions.

Let him know that the first Europeans, who trod the soil of America, were Catholics, and that, therefore, Catholics had the first right to settle here. Next to the red man, they are the "Native Americans." I mean the descendants of Catholic settlers before the arrival of Protestants. Centuries before the landing of the Pilgrim fathers, there were Catholic Bishoprics in

Greenland, and the soil of North America was settled by Catholics.

It was a Catholic voice that cried "Land" from the mast-head of Columbus' ship.

The hero, who first set foot upon the shore of America, and took possession of it in the name of the Catholic Sovereigns of Spain, and planted the Cross to dedicate it to Christianity, was the devout Catholic, Christopher Columbus. This new world itself derives its name from a Catholic.

The Catholic Church, by her missionaries, was the first to spread the kingdom of Christ on the soil of the newly discovered continent.

Bancroft will tell you of the fruitful labors of Catholic missionaries in America long before a single Protestant had set foot upon American soil. When New England Puritans were persecuting their fellow-Christians, and exterminating the natives, the Catholics of Maryland established a commonwealth, wherein flourished civil and religious liberty, and Catholic missionaries converted, civilized, and saved hundreds and thousands of Indians on the Potomac, the St. Lawrence, and westward along the shores of the great lakes.

In the struggle of the colonies for independence, did not the sons of a Catholic nation shed their blood,

side by side, with your forefathers, against a Protestant power?

Americans! never forget this!

And did the great men, who framed the Constitution and directed the affairs of State through that momentous struggle for social freedom, show any distrust of their Catholic fellow-citizens? Was it not providential that no Protestant prince assisted at the inauguration of the Centennial celebration? Indeed, the free institutions of America have nothing to fear from Catholics. Tell us, what Pope, what Catholic Bishop, what Priest, or even what Catholic layman ever wrote a word against your Constitution? On the contrary Pius IX, by giving to this country a Cardinal, has placed the young Republic by the side of the ancient monarchies and empires of Europe. Americans have felt the significance of this recognition on the part of the Holy See. Pius has declared that their republican institutions do not at all conflict with the principles and aims of the Catholic Church. And why should they?

What has the Church to do with purely political forms of government? All that she asks is that her spiritual rights should be recognized; that she should not be hampered or trammelled in her own spiritual

• sphere. More than this she does not ask. She will never be satisfied with less.

Americans ! it is not your protection, it is not your money that the Church seeks. It is only a " fair field and no favor." She wants only free light, free air, a free country—religious liberty in the full sense of the term, as was promised all Christians one hundred years ago in your Declaration of Independence.

Let the Church live and move in her own element, which is the salvation of souls, and you will have no firmer friends and supporters of republican institutions than the Catholics of these States. The Catholic Church, treated in this way, would be the first to pronounce her anathema against every attempt to change the form of your republican government.

But Mr. Thompson should know that the best way to alienate the affections of the people from their form of government, is to make it a pretext for calumny or the instrument of injustice and persecution. Nevertheless the enemies of the Church persistently object to the Catholic maxim : " That lawful princes rule by Divine right."

They are not aware that this maxim, in its objectionable sense is used only by Protestant writers, according to the famous dictum of Protestant Jurists : "*Cujus est regio, illius est religio*,"—" He that rules the country rules also its religion."

In its true and rightful sense, this maxim of ruling by Divine right is applied by the Catholic Church to Republics as well as to Monarchies, and means the Divine right of lawful authority. According to the principle proclaimed by St. Paul, "There is no power but from God."

Catholics have far loftier ideas of human freedom than the adherents of Rousseau's "Social Contract," or those who hold that the authority of the governing power is derived from man.

We are rational creatures, created in the likeness of God, endowed with reason and free will ; and neither man nor angel, neither one individual nor a multitude can have any claim to our submission and obedience ; except their authority be considered as the delegated authority of God, committed to the State for the public good.

If we did not hold the Divine right of authority to our obedience, we ^{sh}ould be abject slaves, to yield submission to men, as such, who have no right or title to it. Hence Catholics recognize in your Republican form of government the same title to allegiance which is possessed by any legitimate form of government, viz. : *That it is a Government by Divine right.* And they are as loyal to the United States, and for the very same reason, as they would be to Pio Nono, if they were the subjects of his temporal rule.

If any man, whether Catholic or Protestant, were to usurp the authority of the United States, and try to make himself King, the Catholics of this Republic would not be the last to resist the usurpation and promote the usurper to a gallows instead of a throne.

If there is any danger to the free institutions of this Republic, it will come from the principles of Protestantism logically developed. Those who deny Divine authority, in matters of religion and conscience, cannot, if they are consistent, have much respect for the authority of the State. Their obedience is not a matter of conscience ; their allegiance depends rather on their interest than on their sense of high obligation. The man who claims the right to say : " The Church, it is myself," why not he also claim the right to say : " The State, it is myself ?" Protestantism, so far from having originated with the people, or being the palladium of their liberties, was, from the very beginning, used by princes and kings as an instrument of despotism.

The aim of the first Protestant Rulers in Germany and England was to unite in their persons both the temporal and spiritual powers, and thus acknowledge no check or restraint. The Catholic Church favors no form of government to the exclusion of others. She knows that there are drawbacks and imperfections in all forms ; all are not equally suited to all

peoples and all circumstances. She acknowledges all lawful authority, but she can live and thrive best where there is least despotism and most freedom.

Let the party which now guides the ship of State in this Republic, which calls itself Republican, cutting loose from the stupid bigotry of know-nothingism and the narrow prejudices of the fanatical men who have too often controlled it, assure their Catholic fellow-citizens, that they shall be amply protected in all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution; that they shall enjoy full liberty of conscience to serve God, and educate their children in the faith of their choice; that no power or party shall be suffered to meddle with their sacred rights to practice their religious duties in peace; let the Republican party issue such a declaration, erect such a platform, and no Catholic will hesitate to support it; certainly no Catholic will be blamed for supporting it.

The assertions, therefore, which Mr. Thompson makes on the necessary antagonism between the Catholic Church and Free Institutions, are characterized by pitiful ignorance and blind audacity. He is reckless of logic, of history, of common sense and of charity; and presents himself before the loyal American public as a narrow-minded bigot. No scholar would venture to repeat the stale calumnies which have been so often refuted. But Mr. Thomp-

son writes as serenely and flippantly about the history and aims of the Catholic Church, as if he were scribbling about some club or meeting house in his native village. In answer to his accusations against the Church as the enemy of liberty, I tell him that if ever this country should become a Catholic country, that is, if Catholics should ever be in the majority, and have the control of political power, then he would see the principles of our constitution carried out to their fullest extent: he would see that these States would be in very deed "United." He would behold a people living in peace and harmony; joined in the bonds of one faith, their hearts beating in unison with love of their fatherland; with charity and forbearance towards all, and respecting the rights of conscience even of their slanderers.

If this magnificent country were one in the true faith, one in religion, as it is one in its civil government, the imagination is not equal to the task of describing the extent of its power and grandeur. I firmly believe that if the American people were to become members of the one true Church of Christ, they would then imbibe principles, and adopt a line of conduct which would perpetuate the prosperity of this country to the end of time.

To contribute my part to this glorious end I wrote my book "Catholicity, Protestantism and Infidelity."

Mr. Thompson sneers at the idea of America becoming a Catholic country. But if he had no fear of such a result, what was the meaning of his book? It is evidently written to prevent such a consummation.

My hope, on the contrary, grows stronger within me, when I consider the character of the greater number of Americans of Anglo-American descent, I make no reference here to fanatical men, with whom it is useless to reason, and whom it is impossible to convince; I refer to the fair, honest and truth-loving Americans, who comprise the immense majority of the people. To them I have addressed my books.

Experience of thirty years proves to me that in their hearts, they esteem the Catholic Church, admire her energy and her conservative principles, and respect her clergy as virtuous, zealous and well-informed men. All they need is to know the Doctrines of the Church as she teaches them, not as they are misrepresented by her enemies, and numbers of them would become Catholics.

My experience as a missionary all over the country for so many years convinces me, that there are no better Catholics in this part of the world than American converts.

If I am asked the reason why this is so I answer, because the qualities which make the American a

good citizens, if they are united with the religious element, will make him a true son of the holy Church.

The qualities of the American character are, decision, energy, earnest striving after an appointed end, enterprise and self-denial, willingness to undergo hardships, combined with benevolence, and readiness to acknowledge merit. Are these not precisely the characteristic qualities of a good practical Catholic?

The American sees, moreover, with satisfaction, that in the Church the way is open to every one, to raise himself if he is capable, even to the glory of the Papal throne ; a dignity which has often been won by men from the humblest ranks of the people, but never by the son of a King or Emperor. He will acknowledge, in the hierarchy of the Church, the most ancient and venerable parliament in existence, where all enjoy the fullest freedom of discussion and liberty of speech.

And how brilliantly the Catholic Church, especially in our times of anarchy in the regions of unsettled religious thoughts, and in the darkness of pantheism and atheism is shining forth by her marks from the top of the mountain of evidence on which Christ has placed her, recognizable by all lovers of truth to be the Divine Church.

Having addressed in this way those of my Ameri-

can fellow-citizen who are yet Protestants by profession, I have also to address myself to those who are neither Catholics nor Protestants, but simply Infidels not believing in revelation, perhaps not even in a Creator. I am persuaded that many of them are not hostile to the truth, if clearly presented to them, and I address them also, because the order of my argument led me to the discussion of Infidelity, as the ultimate consequence of Protestantism.

There are Infidels in Catholic countries too, but they are not Infidels in consequence of the Catholic Rule of faith ; Infidelity can never be deduced from the principle of an infallible teaching authority in matters of faith. But rejecting a Divinely appointed authority, and substituting for it the private interpretation of the Bible, by individual reason, renders faith impossible, gives a clear right to believe nothing beyond the sphere of natural truth, and consequently, leads logically to Infidelity.

Thanks be to God, there are many Protestants who cling to the fragments of Divine truth which they have, and at the expense of their logic, are saved from the abyss of Infidelity.

The headings of my arguments against Infidels in this *fourth* chapter of my book are ; The Undeniable Existence of God—The Undeniable Necessity of Religion—The Undeniable Necessity of a Divinely Re-

vealed Religion—The Undeniable Divine Mission of Christ—The Undeniable Superhuman Character of His Church—The Undeniable Axiom : Where Peter is—there is the Church of Christ.

At the conclusion of the book, I exhort the reader to pray to God that he may be strong enough to follow the way of salvation, thus shown to him, and join the Catholic Church as the true Church ; and when asked why he did so, let him give the inquirer the answer which the French philosopher la Harpe gave to his once Infidel friends : “ *Mes amis, j’ ai examiné, et je crois. Examinez, et vous croirez.* ” “ My friends, I have examined, and I believe ; do you also examine and you will believe.” Follow his example.

This is the plan of my book : “ Catholicity, Protestantism and Infidelity ”—first attacked by Mr. Thompson. Americans, now decide for yourselves, who is right and who is wrong :

Mr. Thompson, who pretends that I wrote the book simply to exasperate the Catholics, and to excite them to unlawful acts. Or I, affirming that I wrote the book, in order to remove from the eyes of truth-loving Protestants the veil of misrepresentation and prejudice.

II.

Mr. Thompson against Papal Infallibility and against my Book : On the Apostolical Authority and Infallibility of the Pope, etc.

I now come to the attack made by Mr. Thompson on the other book, which I published shortly before the opening of the Vatican Council :

“On the Apostolical and Infallible Authority of the Pope in teaching the Faithful, and on his relation to a General Council.”

According to Mr. Thompson, I wrote this book to complete my treacherous design of helping Napoleon and the Pope to overthrow the Republican Government of the United States, and to raise some European prince to the throne of the new Empire !!!

Mr. Thompson must have been laboring under a feverish paroxysm of Know-Nothingism, when he discovered so deep and dangerous a plot in my harmless volume.

I will assure him, on this point, that there is not a shadow of truth in his supposition. I wrote that book for Catholics themselves, and especially, for

Theologians ; knowing full well, that principles of Gallicanism had found their way into the authors, used in many seminaries or schools of theology.

I published the book in three languages, English, French and German, and presented a copy to every Bishop in the United States, in France, and in Germany.

Mr. Thompson is sure, I could not help believing in the Infallibility of the Pope, simply because I was a Jesuit; but he is entirely mistaken.

On taking my degree at the University of Vienna, being then a secular priest, I had the honor to defend that very thesis publicly in the "*Aula*" or great hall of the University.

Afterwards, as Professor of Divinity at the University of Gratz, the capital of Styria, I taught that same dogma to the the theologians assembled at the University. Not, indeed, in the sense in which Mr. Thompson misunderstood it, but in the sense defined later by the Vatican Council; a sense which commends itself to the judgment of logical minds. When I entered the Society of Jesus, I had no need to change my creed.

The definition by the Vatican Council gave only the sanction of a public declaration to doctrine, which I had always held as Divinely revealed and theologically certain. Just in the same way as the definition

of Christ's Divinity, by the Council of Nice, only gave an authoritative expression of the Faith, which the Christians of the preceding centuries had always firmly believed and maintained with their blood.

But, I repeat, I never held, nor ever dreamed of teaching the erroneous notions which Mr. Thompson sets up as the doctrine of Papal Infallibility.

How often must we Catholic, state, and state again, what it is that we mean by Papal Infallibility? How often must we repeat our complaint, that men who write on this subject, will not take the trouble to weigh the precise words in which the dogma is couched, and ponder the well-considered distinctions by which it is protected from the blunders of ignorant or hasty minds?

I must tell Mr. Thompson again that the Divine guidance claimed for the Vicar of Christ, regards his *Office* as the Supreme Head of the Universal Church, when he teaches the whole Church in matters of Faith or morals. It does not mean that the Pope is inspired, nor that he is impeccable or exempt from sin; nor that he is protected from error as a private theologian or writer; nor that his judgment is infallible in questions of natural science or of statecraft. The Vatican Council defined only that the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter, by virtue of Christ's promise, is preserved from error of judgment

when he teaches the Universal Church in Faith or morals. He is invested with the privilege of Infallibility "*as the Supreme Judge*" for the benefit of the Church, so that all questions regarding holy Faith, can be finally and authoritatively settled.

How wisely Christ provided in this way for His Church will be acknowledged by every thoughtful man.

No government whatever can exist without some tribunal invested with the power to decide without the right of appeal to higher courts.

You have an illustration of this in the Supreme Court of the United States. A decision by the Chief Justice and his Court may possibly be wrong, but it has to be accepted as valid. For the sake of peace and order, every citizen must accept the sentence of the Supreme Court, as practically infallible. From it he has no appeal, and he must be content to take it, as the ending of the case.

It is true the decision of the Supreme Court may be based on a false assumption of facts, or on prejudices, or on the unfair bias of party spirit. Nevertheless it is regarded as final, and, therefore, in a certain sense, considered as infallibly right. But no citizen can be forced to give the interior assent of his intellect, to what he knows to be false, or to admit as lawful that which he knows to be unlawful.

A man, for the sake of the public welfare, can give up his claim to his rights, but he can, under no circumstances, give up his intellect, so as to admit as true, but what he clearly perceives to be false. By such a compromise between truth and falsehood, he would forfeit his claim to be a rational being.

Thus, for instance, Mr. Tilden is not bound to acknowledge the decision of the Electoral Commission as right and just, as based on undeniable evidence. But he was bound to accept it as final, and, therefore, as practically right, rather than plunge the country into anarchy; and thus he was forced to admit it, as practically final, that is, without appeal.

Why, nevertheless, is no citizen absolutely bound to accept as right and lawful, whatever a Supreme Court in a civil government may decide? Because no tribunal but one in this world has a right to call itself the "Kingdom of Truth." No civil court is the "pillar and ground of truth."

That prerogative belongs only to the Church of God and is claimed by her. She is the Kingdom of Truth. For this Christ came into the world "that He might bear witness to the Truth," and before Pilate called Himself the King of Truth. For this He established a Church with authority to teach the Truth. The decisions of the Supreme Tribunal in the Church not only must be practically, but *actually* *Infallible*.

not only *final*, but also compelling the interior assent of the mind to their truth.

It was only a question of how the infallible teaching of the Church shall be made known to the faithful, and through whom. This question the Vatican Council decided.

My readers will easily see, that in writing on the Infallibility of the Pope, I could not have had Protestants in view, since they deny the Infallibility of the Church at large. I addressed Catholics who hold the Infallibility of the Church, and I tried to show them how the Infallibility of the Pope flows logically from that of the Church. These are so closely interwoven that one cannot be denied without the denial of the other. In fact the Infallibility of the Pope is the Infallibility of the Church, speaking through her Supreme Head.

We have a striking proof of what I say in the renowned Professor of Munich, Dr. Doëllinger, the unfortunate apostate leader of the so-called "Old-Catholics" and "Anti-Infallibilists."

Hearing that the Vatican Council would, in all probability, decide the question, he, in his arrogance, dared to send a circular to all the Bishops of the Catholic world, warning them to abstain from so dangerous a project, because, he says in this manifesto to the bishops: you would here pronounce not on

a mere theoretical question, but, on the contrary, on a most practical one, which could, at any time, embarrass you alarmingly. For, if you define that the Pope is infallible, when defining on matters of Faith, and if afterwards a Pope would define as an Article to be believed, what subsequently proved to be wrong, see in what difficulties you would have placed yourselves.

Thus did Dr. Dœllinger express himself, not considering that even a schoolboy could have answered him : “ Dear Sir—If you really believe in the Infallibility of the Church, how can you apprehend, after a definition of the Church, ‘ that the Pope, when defining an article of Faith, cannot err,’ that a Pope ever can, to the end of the world, do as you fear ?”

Your admonition to the Bishops proves, that you in fact, do not believe in the Infallibility of the Church itself.*

* For those who know Dœllinger as I knew him some thirty years ago, such a hallucination in the man is not very surprising. Dœllinger was never, in the strict sense of the word, a theologian. On the contrary, I found him always, only a most superficially trained theologian, and no philosopher at all.

He was much, too much, occupied in the archives of history, and was poisoned by the reading of pretentious sycophants, and, consequently, treated history in such an unfair and arbitrary manner, that observing at the same time, his uncommon pride, I told my friends in Europe just when his reputation had reached its climax : “ Look out ! that man may yet become a heresiarch !” and so he has turned out to be.

The proximate occasion of his violent opposition to the definition of the

This remark leads to another, namely, how imprudently the enemies of the Church acted in becoming so alarmed at seeing the Dogma defined. Politicians predicted disasters ; disloyal professors foretold schisms and heresies ; an Infidel Press dared the Council, at its peril, to proclaim the definition ; Protestants saw in it the breaking up of the Catholic Church. Why all these clamors ? On the contrary, they rather had reason to hail this definition with satisfaction. Because if, after that definition, a Pope should ever define an erroneous doctrine to be an Article of Faith, obliging the whole Church to believe it as such, and it should afterward be condemned by another Pope, the Church would have forfeited all her claim to be a Divine and Infallible Church, since she had herself defined it to be an Article of Faith that the Pope is Infallible in such décisions, but had, nevertheless, erred.

The Church, by that definition, if not in fact Divine and Infallible, would have dug her own grave. This the enemies of the Church and of the definition, overlooked entirely.

Indeed, nothing more glorious than that the

Vatican Council, was because Pius IX, when inviting the best theologians of Europe to Rome, in order to prepare the points to be treated in the Council, did not invite him. Such a humiliation in the face of learned Europe, he could not bear, and, therefore, he sought revenge.

Church, well aware of what we have just said, and knowing that she staking on that definition her own Infallibility and the whole character, and claim to be the Divine Church, nevertheless pronounced that definition with such dignity, calmness and resoluteness.

I undertook to show, in my book, by what an array of witnesses, all of the highest authority, the Dogma of Infallibility can be maintained.

The headings of the chapters are as follows :

I. Testimony of the Holy Scriptures, concerning the Primacy of St. Peter, as invested by Christ Himself with Infallible authority in matters of faith.

II. Testimony of the Holy Fathers, from the beginning of the Christian Era, until the days of St. Bernard, proclaiming the See of St. Peter at Rome, to be the highest tribunal in matters of faith.

III. Testimony of all the General Councils of the East and West : Declaring the Judgment of the Chair of St. Peter at Rome to be the rule of faith.

IV. Testimony of the Popes themselves : Asserting their prerogative as the Supreme and Infallible judges in matters of faith.

V. Testimony of the Popes exercising this prerogative : The Popes of all centuries definitely, by their own authority condemning heresy and errors.

VI. Testimony of the most celebrated theologians and universities, since the time of Thomas Aquinas,

maintaining the Infallibility of the Pope, when he speaks "Ex cathedra."

VII. Testimony of princes and peoples : Acknowledging the authority of the Roman See to be the highest tribunal on earth, and the Roman Pontiffs the Infallible judges of faith.

VIII. "The Ratio Theologica."

IX. Objections refuted.

To this array of authentic testimony, Mr. Thompson replies by trying to throw doubt on the trustworthiness of my quotations.

In proof of his general calumny, he especially denies :

1. That it was Pope Sylvester who, with the co-operation of Constantine, convoked the first General Council of Nice.

2. He denies that it was Hosius with two priests who presided at the Council.

3. He denies that it was Pope Sylvester who confirmed the Decrees of the Council.

4. He denies that some of the Canons attributed to this Council indicate the right of the Head of the Church to decide in matters of faith.

5. He denies that this Dogma was implicitly defined at the General Council of Florence. Let us see with what right he denies it.

No. 1.—Mr. Thompson denies that it was Pope Syl-

vester who convoked the Council of Nice through the Emperor Constantine.

We say : In order to prove that it was so, it is by no means necessary that this fact should have been explicitly mentioned by those few secular and profane writers of history of that period, who, in their very succinct accounts, make no mention of many other and much more important events. It is sufficient and convincing evidence, that this was the case, if other most creditable authors have mentioned it.

Now the fact, that it was by the authority of Sylvester that the Council of Nice was convoked, is explicitly attested in the Acts of two General Councils, that of Chalcedon and the third Council of Constantinople.

These Councils were held near Nice and not very long after the Council of Nice. Mr. Thompson has no reason to complain if we give more credit to men who lived fourteen or fifteen hundred years nearer to the time of the Council of Nice, and 4,000 miles nearer to the place than to the Washington Critic, who wants us to believe otherwise in the nineteenth century. It is true that the Pope, to make his wishes known to the Bishops of the Church throughout the Empire availed himself of the co-operation of the Emperor. The will of Pope Sylvester was made known to the Bishops of the world, in

the most speedy and effective way, through the agency of the Emperor; and herein is contained substantially all that the Papal convocation means, according to the common proverb: "What you do by another you are considered as doing by yourself."

Nobody, who knows who Constantine was, and in what friendly relation he stood to Sylvester, can imagine that he would have dared to convoke a Council of the Universal Church, against the wishes or without the authority of the Head of the Church.

God was pleased to give to the world, for all time to come, the edifying example of the manner in which the civil power should co-operate with the Church, to promote the glory of God and the salvation of men. Would that all Christian Emperors had followed the admirable example of zeal and piety set by the first Emperor.

It was in those times of difficult communications, the only practical way left to Sylvester, to convoke the Council and to spread its decisions.

No. 2.—Mr. Thompson denies that Pope Sylvester sent Legates to preside over the Council.

In proof of this assertion he quotes Eusebius of Cæsarea, who in his "Life of Constantine" does not mention it, but relates that, at the opening of the Council, Constantine occupied the most distinguished place, and on his right side sat a Bishop, not Hosius

or the other Legates of the Pope, viz.: Victor and Valentine, the two Roman priests, and that the Bishop sitting on the right side addressed the Emperor, when he had finished his Allocution ; and that, therefore, this Bishop was to be considered as occupying the first place at the Council ; and was the highest in order of ecclesiastical dignity in that Council. Let us see what strength these arguments possess.

In the first place, it is well known that Eusebius, of Cæsarea, was a partisan of the Arians, and hated Hosius and the other Legates of the Pope. Besides, what argument can be drawn from the silence of Eusebius on this point, when we know that he passes over in silence even the condemnation of the Arians, which was the main point of which he should have spoken, as it was the very purpose for which the Council had been convoked ? If Mr. Thompson had read some history he would not have made so egregious a blunder about Hosius.

When the two priests, Victor and Valentine, were sent from Rome, they were joined in the East by Bishop Hosius, who had already been nine years there as Legate of the Pope, and who now became the leading character in the Council of Nice, as he had been in many particular Synods celebrated in the East, just before that Council. In the Acts of the Council of Sardica, which is considered as an ap-

pendix to that of Nice, it is explicitly mentioned that Hosius presided with the priests sent by the Pope. The simple and undisputed fact that Hosius, with the two priests, as Legates of the Pope, signed the Acts of the Council of Nice, before all others—Patriarchs or Bishops—of itself proves that they also must have presided over the Council.

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Also Athanasius, who, no doubt, knew better than any one else what was done at Nice, in his letter to the Monks of Egypt, positively confirms what I have said of Hosius.

Else what title could Hosius produce for such a distinction of subscription, he being a simple Bishop from distant Spain, and the two priests, not being Bishops at all, their signatures could not therefore precede that of the oldest Patriarchs and of all the Eastern clergy? The only answer which can be satisfactory is, that they were the men, who had been sent by the Pope, to preside over the Council in his name.

Mr. Thompson lays much stress on the incident "that a certain Bishop sat at the Emperor's right hand," and he concludes that this must have been the presiding officer.

If Mr. Thompson had read more, or had travelled in other lands, he would know that the right side is not everywhere held to be the post of honor, espe-

cially is it not so, according to the fashion of the East. Nor is it in our day at the Court of Russia ; and a moderate acquaintance with ancient writers would have informed him that it was a Roman custom, that "*in sacris*" the left side was considered to be the post of honor. This is attested by Plutarch, Quæst. Rom. 18 ; by Varro de Lingua Lat., Lib. 6, verb. Sienna ; by Cicero de Deo, Lib. 2 ; by Pliny. Lib. 2, cap. 54.

If there was ever a Council ruled by the Legates of the Pope, it was that of Chalcedon, celebrated about a century after that of Nice. Now, there, in the Acts it is related, that the Legates of Leo the Great, sat at the left side.

No. 3.—Mr. Thompson denies that the Acts of the Council of Nice were ever confirmed by Pope Sylvester, or needed such confirmation, or were ever sent to Rome. He affirms that the Bishops simply signed the Acts, and that Constantine promulgated them, without even farther action of the Pope. We answer :

We have already observed, that, in those times of difficult communications, the most convenient, most practical and efficacious means to accomplish that purpose, were the Emperor's orders and influence, and as the Papal Delegates, according to the instructions of Sylvester, had already signed the Acts in his name,

there was no moral doubt concerning the confirmation, as soon as the Acts would reach the Pope ; and it was but just to suppose his consent and approval, that the Acts should be sent without delay in order to suppress Arianism as soon as possible. If the Legates and the Fathers of the Council had acted otherwise, he would rather have disapproved of their conduct.

But, that the Acts of the Council were at the same time sent to Rome by the Fathers of the Council, and submitted to the Pope for confirmation, is clear from the express declaration of the Council of Rome, held under Pope Felix III. In the Epistle of that Council to the Eastern Bishops, the following words are read : "The three hundred and eighteen Fathers assembled at Nice, mindful of the words of the Lord : 'Thou art Peter,' transmitted all the Decrees of the Council to the Roman Church for confirmation."

This Council was celebrated 1400 years ago. Here again we hold that the Fathers assembled in it knew better at that time what had been done by the Fathers of Nice, than Mr. Thompson to-day.

I will only add, that according to equally ancient testimonies, the Acts of no Council during all the Christian Era ever were held binding, if they had not been confirmed by the Holy See.

This rule is confirmed by the following words of

Gelasius, the successor of Felix, in his Epistle to the Durdanian Bishops : “ The whole decision lies in the power of the Apostolical See—those enactments only, which this See has confirmed are valid ; those which it has rejected, are without binding force.”

We tell Mr. Thompson once more, that there is no fact in history more completely and more clearly established than that no General Council was ever celebrated, through the whole period of the existence of the Church, that was not convoked by a Pope ; though in some cases, when the Bishops were already assembled, as in the Fifth Council and in that of Constance, only the consequent assent of the Pope made them be considered as legitimately assembled : that the Popes by their Legates, or by themselves, presided over all these General Councils and confirmed their Acts.

To affirm, as Mr. Thompson does, that the Council of Nice made an exception, and that Constantine was the only bearer of its authority, and that things were done likewise in the following Councils, only provokes a smile of contempt at such ignorance.

Why did the Patriarchs of the old Churches never pretend to such a right ? Why was the right of the Popes in this regard never questioned by them, not even by Photius, the schismatic ; and why would all the Bishops of the East have tamely submitted to

such a power, if it had been a mere usurpation? There is only one rational explanation; it is the principle which has guided all the Bishops assembled in General Councils, that it is the Divinely appointed Prerogative of the Pope, as successor of St. Peter, as they so often, so emphatically and enthusiastically affirmed in these Councils. If it were possible for an Emperor to usurp the Prerogative of the Pope, to convoke and direct a General Council in spite of him, the Emperors of the East were not the men to lose an opportunity of doing so. They tried more than once to hold assemblies of Bishops, known to favor their ambitious schemes; but they were invariably rebuked by the reigning Pope, and the Acts of such pretended councils were promptly annulled. In proof of this I need only refer to the action of Pope Vigilius, of Paul I, of Adrian I, of Stephen VI, etc.

No. 4.—Mr. Thompson denies that the two Canons to which I referred as expressing the sentiments of the Bishops assembled at Nice, are authentic, and rejects them as spurious.

Before we give any direct answer to this objection of Mr. Thompson, and in order to understand better how unjustly he censures me, and claims to reject these Canons, I have to premise the following remarks :

First.—It is well-known to every student of eccle-

siastical history, that the Canons of the Council of Nice are not numbered and arranged in the same way by ecclesiastical writers ; as there is no original copy extant of the Acts of the Council.

Second.—This difference is based on another historical fact, viz. : that the Canons of the many contemporary Councils, celebrated shortly before the Council at Nice, or not long after it, were compiled in one volume with the Canons which were specially enacted by the Fathers of Nice, and, therefore, were also known through the Church as Canons of Nice. This may have been done the more easily as all these Canons represented the discipline of the Church at the time when the Bishops assembled at Nice, and many of these laws had been enacted by the very same Bishops, who had been at Nice, or by contemporary Bishops.

Critics agree now that only twenty Canons were enacted at the General Council ; but that many others were considered as Canons of Nice, and held as genuine, we shall substantiate very thoroughly. Thus for instance :

St. Jerome. Epist. III., refers to a Canon of the Council of Nice, "On the Holy Scriptures," which is not among the XX.

St. Ambrose refers to a Canon of Nice, "On Bigamies," which is not among the XX.

Sozimus, in his letters to the Sixth Council of Carthage, refers to a Canon of the Council of Nice, "On Appeals." which is not among the XX.

The Bishops in the Third Council of Carthage under the Pope Sergius, refer to a Canon on the "Saying of Mass," which is not among the XX.

St. Athanasius and Julius I, writing to the Arians, refer to a Canon "On examining the Acts of one Council in another," and yet this also is not among the XX.

So it is, also, with the Canons which I quoted. *I did not invent them.* They have the authority of older and better historians than Mr. Thompson. And in proof that they express the rule of Faith and discipline, even at that early date, I will inform Mr. Thompson that, only a few years after the Council of Nice, Pope Julius I, wrote to the Bishops of the East: "Do you not know that it is customary to write to us first, in order that we may define what is right?" and he annulled what they had done without his consent. And did not Socrates, the profane historian himself, in his history, Lib. 11, Cap. 13, write: "Canon Ecclesiasticus vetat, ne decreta absque consensu Episcopi Romani censeantur valida."

"The Ecclesiastical Canon forbids that Decrees should be considered binding, except when approved by the Bishop of Rome."

The Canon I quoted first does not affirm more.

The other Canon which I quoted, reads as follows :
 “The incumbent of the Roman See, is the head of all Patriarchs, as was Peter himself; for he is the Vicar of Christ over the whole Church.”

This Canon, which Mr. Thompson pronounces spurious also, is nevertheless, read in all the Eastern collections : *Arabic, Coptic, Armenian, Chaldaic and Syriac.*

Here again we are under the impression that those Orientals, who lived fifteen hundred years nearer in time to the Council of Nice, give us a more credible testimony to the discipline and Faith of the olden times, at the period of the Council of Nice, than Mr. Thompson gives from his seat in the Cabinet of Washington.

It is easy to cry spurious, and to mislead the multitude, who are willing to be misled, in regard to Catholic doctrine, but it is not so easy to impose upon scholars.

And suppose, for the sake of argument, that Mr. Thompson was fortunate enough to find us guilty of some mistake, concerning one or other quotation, or of some inaccuracy, would that invalidate the array of undeniable and irreproachable witnesses that sustains and corroborates the Dogma I defend ?

I condensed, in my book, more than one thousand

historical references, from the beginning of the Christian era, down to our days. Now, if out of 1,000 columns that support a building, two or three, on close examination, are found not firm, are we to infer from this that the 998 that remain must be declared void of strength?

Moreover, what reason has Mr. Thompson to ring the alarm-bell with such violence, because of some inaccuracy in quoting documents fifteen hundred years old, whilst he himself is guilty of misquotation from authors of our own time, and even from my own Book, the very one, he has chosen as a target for his attacks?

Mr. Thompson attributes to Count de Maistre a quotation which I made from Voltaire—from his “*Essai sur l'Histoire Générale*.”

Voltaire has these remarkable words, acknowledging the advantages, which nations had derived from the Tribunal of the Sovereign Pontiffs, even in temporal and political affairs: “The interests of mankind demand a bridle by which princes may be restrained, and the people saved. This bridle might, by common consent, be placed in the hands of the Roman Pontiffs.”

These words, which mean very much in the mouth of Voltaire, Mr. Thompson attributes to Count de Maistre, notwithstanding my quotation, thus destroy-

ing the force of the argument, which they were intended to convey.

The same he does with a text of Voltaire's "Essai sur les mœurs," which I quoted, and which he again places in the mouth of de Maistre.

Is Mr. Thompson so innocent as to confound Voltaire with de Maistre, and not know what books each of them wrote?

But, in the next paragraph, we will convict him of misquotations of a far more serious character, which show him to be deserving of no trust, even as a compiler.

No. 5.—Mr. Thompson denies that the Dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope, defined in the sense of the Vatican Council, was already virtually defined by the Council of Florence.

The Canon to which I referred reads as follows:
Definimus sanctam Apostolicam Sedem et Romanum Pontificem in universum orbem terrarum primum tenere, et ipsum Romanum Pontificem successorem esse Beati Petri, principis Apostolorum, et verum Christi vicarium, totiusque ecclesiæ caput, et omnium Christianorum patrem et doctorem existere, et ipsi in Beato Petro pascendi, regendi et gubernandi universalem ecclesiam a Domino Nostro Jesu Christo plenum potestatem traditam esse, quemadmodum etiam

in gestis Œcumenicorum Conciliorum et in sacris Canonibus continetur."

"We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff holds the Primacy throughout the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of Blessed Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and the true Vicar of Christ, that he is the head of the whole Church, the Father and Teacher of all Christians, and that to him, in Blessed Peter, full power was given by our Lord Jesus Christ, to feed, to rule, to govern the Universal Church, as it is also contained in the Acts of the Œcumenical Councils, and in the Holy Canons."

I affirmed, that by this definition, the Infallibility of the Pope, defining in matter of faith was virtually proclaimed, because otherwise the words of the definition could never be justified.

The Council by this definition identified the Pope with Peter, and declared him to be the true Vicar of Christ—the Doctor of all Christians, consequently, also that of the Bishops—to be the Pastor of the whole flock of Christ, by whom he was charged to feed and lead the sheep and lambs, that they may not be poisoned by errors, as they would be, if the Pope could, by a wrong definition in matters of faith and morals, mislead the whole Church.

And here Mr. Thompson had made a marvellous

discovery, and is jubilant over it. He says, that I changed the punctuation of the text, substituting after the words "*traditum esse*," a "period" instead of a "comma."

By leaving the "comma" instead of the period, Mr. Thompson, following the footsteps of Du Pin and other imbeciles, tells the reader, that according to the definition of the Council of Florence, the Pope enjoys only full power, to teach and govern the Church, as far as it is limited by Councils and Canons.

Now, we beg the kind reader to pay particular attention to what we shall say, because Mr. Thompson on this matter, speaks more confidently than ever of a triumphal attack. I reply :

As my book was stereotyped at the beginning and no change has ever been made in the text of the definition in any of the six editions in English, nor in its German and French editions, we defy Mr Thompson to produce a single copy in which a "period" has been substituted for the "comma."

In every copy after the word "*traditum esse*" stands

A COMMA AND NOT A PERIOD.

Thompson may refer to a period placed after the word Christ in the translation which I gave for those of my readers, who do not understand Latin, and for whom I had to express the substance of the definition

as clearly as possible, and in good English, as we do when publishing in English the Papal Allocutions which are delivered in Latin.

To gratify Mr. Thompson, we have, in this pamphlet, adopted the translation he wants at the expense of plain English and elegant construction, and, nevertheless, as thus rendered, the force of the decree, proclaiming the Infallibility, remains the same.

Thompson, himself, says that in this definition all the parts must be taken together, and so I do ; and on this very ground rests the unanswerable strength of my proofs, so that even adopting, as we have already said, his own translation, the meaning of the definition can only be interpreted as is done in my book : " Such is manifestly the doctrine taught by the Acts of the General Councils, as well as by the sacred Canons."

Mr. Thompson thinks every schoolboy must see that what he said, denying the corroborating force of the Decree of Florence, in favor of the Official Infallibility of the Pope, is right. We, on the contrary, feel confident that he will see that it is wrong. For :

Secondly.—Comma or period, colon or semicolon, or whatever other stop is adopted, the meaning of the definition always remains the same, viz.: that what is there defined had always been believed, and

was also attested by all the Councils and Canons, and consequently, was nothing new.

Or does Mr. Thompson think that the Fathers of the Council of Florence meant, that Peter and Christ had full power to govern the Church only so far as granted by the Canons? Or does he suppose that the Fathers of this Council were blockheads, defining in one breath that the Pope had full power to teach and govern the whole Church and yet in the next that he had it not, plainly contradicting themselves in terms?

Thirdly.—In order to make a change in the sense, apparently favorable to Du Pin, Thompson & Co., the word "*etiam*" should be taken out; but this never can be done, as all the ancient copies of the Acts of the Council of Florence contain it, as was recently shown by the examination of the oldest manuscripts at the Council of the Vatican.

Corrupting the text of books, taking out words and putting in new ones, is the method of Protestant Controversialists, not of Catholics. Protestants learned such fraud from their very founder. All the world knows, that Luther dared to put the word "*sola*"—"sola fides," "*faith alone*" saves—into the Holy Writ.

Asked by what authority he did so, he, raged and according to his polite language, answered:

“Asses! by my own will. Doctor Martin Luther wants it to be so; ‘stet pro ratione voluntas,’ ‘My will is the reason for it’”

Finally.—Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the Fathers of the Council of Florence would have spoken as Du Pin and Company wants us to believe, what advantage could Mr. Thompson ever draw from it for his argument against the full power of the Pope to govern the Church and his official Infallibility in defining in matters of Faith.

Let him show us a Decree or Canon of a General Council which restrained the full power of the Pope in ecclesiastical affairs, or the Infallibility in his definitions. The only one to which they may attempt to refer is that of the Council of Constance.

Mr. Thompson is welcome to all the consolation he can derive from the Acts of the Council of Constance; it cannot help his argument.

This Council was assembled for the purpose of deciding who was the lawful Pope, and to do this it was necessary that all the pretenders should submit to the authority of the Council. But when it became a Regular Œcumenical Council, presided over by a lawful Pope, there was no question of subjecting the Pope to any rules or laws passed by the Council. Hence, the Council itself, in its Fortieth Session

declared: "A Pope lawfully elected cannot be bound by a Council."

Martin V, as soon as his authority was recognized, acting upon this principle, issued a decree, which reads as follows: "*Nemini fas est a Supremo Judice, seu Apostolica sede seu Romano Pontifice Jesu Christi Vicario in terris, appellare, aut illius judicium in causa fidei declinare.*"

"It is not lawful for any one to appeal from the Roman Pontiff, who is the Supreme Judge and the Vicar of Christ on earth, or, by subterfuge, to elude his judgment in matters of Faith."

Therefore, to all those who wish to interpret the definition of the Council of Florence, so as to restrict the Papal power by Canons, we may address the words, which Pope Gelasius addressed to Faustus, the Prefect of the Emperor, when he had spoken of Canons to limit the Papal authority: "*Ineptias suas sibi servant.*" "Let them keep their folly for themselves."

Permit me, before concluding this part of my reply, to ask Mr. Thompson: Did you ever see dogs barking against the moon? They do it, and seem almost enraged, because they seem to take the features of the moon as those of a man. But they are deceived. In the same way, the enemies of Papal Infallibility, look at it as if it belonged to the

man, and not to his office. The moon, indeed, enlightens the darkness of night, and so the Papal Infallibility spreads light on the path of salvation in the darkness of Infidelity. But, as the moon gets its light only from the sun, not from itself, so the light of Infallibility belonging to the official position of the Pope, is only communicated through Christ, the Son of God, and is not the quality of the Pope considered as man.

Never forget it. The doctrinal Infallibility of the Pope in matters of Faith and morals is an *official* prerogative and not an individual one. And even in this regard, the Pope, in force of the definition of the Vatican Council, only can claim it when teaching the Universal Church, and then only when "defining," in the strict sense of the word. Then he is Infallible, acting as Pope—the Vicar of Christ—remaining for himself at the same moment when he does it—a fallible man, like any man else.

III.

*Mr. Thompson against the Popes and the Jesuits,
and against me, because I am a Jesuit.*

What Sir Walter Scott said about "the tangled web, woven by those who practice to deceive," may well be applied to the outrageous perversions of facts, and the base calumnies of Thompson's Book.

Mr. Thompson chooses for the special objects of his calumny two classes of persons who are so unfortunate as to have incurred his displeasure. They are the Popes and the Jesuits.

I.

On the Popes he pours out all the envenomed slanders, all the stale calumnies, all the unsavory falsehoods which their most unscrupulous enemies ever invented. No matter how often they may have been refuted even by Protestant historians, no matter how absurd or impossible ; no matter how indecent, nothing comes amiss to him, if it can be used to defame a Roman Pontiff.

For instance, he mentioned "the bastards" of the immortal Pius VI. Mr. Thompson does not blush to calumniate that most holy Pontiff, who lived and died in our times as a martyr of the faith, whose sanctity inspired even the enemies of the Church with respect, and dares to paint him as a lascivious villain! This is the darkest calumny ever written since paper and ink were invented, and it shows what we are to think of the rest of the infamous calumnies against the Pontiffs, which Mr. Thompson has not indeed invented, but which he unscrupulously repeats from the slanderers who preceded him. All the world knows that the Protestant leaders loved to paint the Pope as the living Anti-Christ.

We answer these wholesale calumnies in the words of a learned and honest Protestant, who vindicates the character of the Popes attacked by such men, in the following summary and triumphant manner. We refer to Herder, the celebrated Protestant historian, who says: "There is no line of men so distinguished for talent and for virtue, as the magnificent succession of the Popes." It is an undeniable fact, if anything in history is certain, that none have labored more successfully for the freedom and advancement of nations than the Popes.

For their undying struggle against Eastern and Western despots they deserve the gratitude of the

world, as all the best historians, whether Protestant or Catholic, gladly acknowledge. Such men as Herder and Ranke, Leo—Wolfgang Mentzel, and even Voltaire will not be suspected of partiality in the tribute they pay to the invaluable services of the Popes in the cause of civilization and liberty.

In the long line of Popes, many of whom were martyrs, many eminent for sanctity of life, scarcely half a dozen are accused of immoral or depraved conduct; and they belong to the most turbulent period of disturbances in Rome. Even against these few, how much has been proved? Herder tells us: "Their faults were such as would scarcely have been noticed, had they not been the moral failings of Popes."

And, if we admit the truth of the accusations brought against them, how would this impair their rights or their prerogative? What argument would it afford against the Divine origin and organization of the Church? And those few Popes whom the enemies of the Church thus accuse, did not neglect, in their Decrees, to exhort the faithful to live a holy life; and Christians submitted to them as well as to the holiest Popes: a sign that they looked only to the Authority with which these Popes, as successors of St. Peter, were invested, not to their private life.

God permitted such events as a proof that it was

not on the ascendancy of morals, talents and learning by which the immense majority of the Popes were distinguished, that there permanency and authority in the Church were grounded, but on the privilege given to Peter and his successors by Christ Himself, who did not pray for St. Peter and his successors in office that they might be incapable of sin, but, that they might not be liable to err in their decisions in matters of faith and morals, and might safely guide the Universal Church.

II.

The other class of men, abused and calumniated by Mr. Thompson, are the Jesuits, whom he presents to his readers as a body of men remarkable for their arrogance, their selfishness and their unscrupulous use of every means to promote their own interests. He considers them the personification of all that is evil and cunning.

Before speaking directly to these sweeping charges of Mr. Thompson against the Jesuits, I wish to direct the attention of the reader to the specific charges which are usually brought forward by the enemies of the Jesuits.

They may be classified under the following headings :

1. They are accused of using all their influence in

opposition to Republican Institutions, and in favor of despotic Monarchies.

2. They are charged with holding and teaching that tyrannicide or regicide is justifiable.

3. They are said to maintain principles of loose morality.

4. They are accused of teaching and propagating the detestable principle expressed in the maxim : "The end justifies the means."

Hear our reply :

No. 1.—To the *first* charge, that Jesuits are in favor of Monarchies and despotic Governments, I answer : If it were true, how can you explain the undeniable fact, that the worst enemies of the Jesuits were the crowned heads. In our own days the two greatest despotisms of the civilized world are Russia, and Prussia ; and these precisely are the leading persecutors of the Jesuits. Especially you will look in vain through the pages of modern history, for a more unscrupulous tyrant, or one who has shown a more contemptuous disregard for the liberty of the people, than Bismarck.

If, then, the Jesuits are so anxious to promote despotic governments, why does Bismarck not use them as tools and sympathize with them ? Why were they the first victims of his rage against the Catholic Church and its Head, the Pope ?

And why does the usurper, King Victor Emmanuel, who calls himself a Catholic King, follow in his footsteps, if the Jesuits are so fond of arbitrary government?

And again, if the Jesuits loved monarchy for its own sake, in preference to a republican form of government, why did they not establish it in the only instance when it was entirely in their power to mould a new and flourishing State? It is a well-known fact that in the famous Reductions of Paraguay, where their influence was paramount, they established a Patriarchal-Democratic form of Government, strong, free and prosperous; with the promise of a splendid future. But their work was undone, their missions destroyed, the Christian Indians attacked, plundered, scattered or slain by the emissaries of despotic monarchs. Let the enemies of the Jesuits, if they can, point to a single Republic whose form of government the Jesuits ever tried to overthrow, or to change into a Monarchy or Empire.

No. 2.—To the *second* charge, that Jesuits taught and hold regicide licit, I answer: This too is false as an unqualified assertion. But, if I were to admit that a Jesuit theologian taught, that under certain conditions of extreme cruelty on the part of a tyrant, and of extreme suffering and misery on the part of the people, it would be lawful to save the country by

killing the tyrant : I doubt if Americans are the men to hold up their hands in horror at such a principle. If American statesmen are in favor of slavish submission under any and all circumstances, they have undergone a change in political ethics, which will make them more acceptable to the despotic sovereigns of other lands than to their own countrymen.

No. 3.—To the *third* charge : Jesuits are guilty of teaching loose principle of morality, I say : The accusation is founded upon the views expressed by Jesuit theologians on the subject of "Probabilism" and of "Mental Reservation." I will despatch this charge also in a few but peremptory words of explanation and vindication.

In regard to "Probabilism," their doctrine is based upon the principle, that when a law is not certain, or not certainly promulgated, or not certainly applicable, then it does not bind the conscience. Because liberty or human freedom is in possession, and the conscience cannot be bound with certainty, unless there is certainty about the binding force, that is, about the law. I think it would be hard to find a lawyer of any reputation, who would seriously dispute the soundness of this principle.

The teaching of Jesuit theologians on the subject of "Mental Reservation" excites a hypocritical

horror in certain parties who have not always been themselves distinguished for their love of truth. "Mental Reservation," as taught by Jesuits, is very innocent. It does not mean a license to lie, or to slander, or to calumniate, or to retail the calumnies of others. But it means, that under certain circumstances, when charity or prudence dictates silence, it is lawful to evade questions, which should not be asked or answered; that it is lawful so to answer, without telling a falsehood, as not to give the information, which the questioner has no right to demand.

Does Mr. Thompson hold that it is necessary in all cases to answer all the questions that may be asked by children, or by curious persons, or by inquisitive busy-bodies? And if circumstances were such as to make it necessary to give some answer, would he think it sinful or immoral to give an evasive answer?

No. 4.—To the *fourth* charge, that Jesuits teach the detestable principle, that "the end justifies the means." I say :

Some years ago, when the secret societies of Europe, undertook to create popular excitement against the Jesuits, one of their battle cries was this "motto" which they attributed to the Order. A Jesuit thereupon offered a reward of a thousand dollars, to any one, who could find in any Jesuit theologian an opinion favorable to the maxim, which their enemies

had invented and propagated for their own detestable purposes. The reward has never yet been claimed. Let Mr. Thompson make an effort to win it. And suppose that a single theologian of the Jesuits had expressed himself in a doubtful way, in whatever regard, we emphatically say, with what right would you make all the Jesuits responsible for an error, advanced by a single individual, as his own opinion?

I might go further, and bring the accusation home to more than one calumniator of the Jesuits; and I might find proof of the charge in the book of Mr. Thompson himself. It looks as if that gentleman thinks himself justified in using any means, no matter how nefarious, to repeat any slander, and, to rehearse any calumny, no matter how vile, if it will serve his purpose to discredit the Catholic Church and blacken the name of Jesuit.

Such writers vainly accuse the Jesuits, and behave themselves as capital Jesuits, taking the word, for the name, in the bad sense in which they understand it.

Finally, since the Jesuits teach such a detestable and immoral principle, why are they not accused of conforming their own lives to it? Jesuits are not accused even by their enemies, of immorality in their manner of living; and yet, if they were guilty of teaching others such principles, they could be proved to be monsters of immorality. So far from it, they

have ever lived, over the whole world, in the midst of the People and of the Courts of Princes, such blameless lives, that, in former times, a popular belief was established, that the Jesuits were possessed of a certain herb, which they used as a charm which protected them from temptations against chastity.

The Emperor Ferdinand, hearing of this belief, asked his confessor, a Jesuit, if there was any truth in it? The confessor answered in the affirmative. "What is this charm the Emperor insisted?" This charm, the Jesuit answered, is called: The fear of God.

Observe also, that, at every mentioned point of objection, the Jesuits were accused of favoring human freedom too much. But this very charge will be in your eyes, free Americans, one argument more, that the Jesuits are not the men to enslave people, and to encroach upon lawful freedom.

Mr. Thompson listened with too willing an ear to the accusers of the Jesuits, but did he ever reflect on the answer we have just given? Never. He would do better to listen to the admonition of Judge Baine, in his book, already quoted, saying: "It is a principle of universal jurisprudence, that no man, not even the lowest culprit, shall be condemned unheard, no matter how fierce his accusers may be, and no matter how great the crimes

they may lay to his charge. The judge who would condemn a man upon mere clamor, without any investigation into the actual conduct of the person accused, would be considered both cruel and unjust."

Mr. Thompson thinks himself exempt from this rule. He imagines he finds sufficient reason for condemning the Jesuits, in the fact that they were expelled from Catholic countries, and suppressed in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV.

If he had studied the history of that epoch, he would know that one of the greatest glories of the Order is, that it incurred the undying hatred of the unprincipled, irreligious and profligate statesmen who then governed Portugal, Spain and France. The intrigues, the violent threats of schism, the stories of pretended plots and crimes, by which they finally forced from the reluctant Clement XIV, the decree of suppression, are well known to all who care to investigate the truth. The deep despondency and heart-rending grief of the infirm Pontiff, broken down with disease and anxieties, are also matters of authentic history. His grief shortened his life. He was frequently heard saying in accents of the deepest sorrow. "Compulsus feci!" "I was forced to do it!"

If my readers wish to know the true character of the men who persecuted the Jesuits, and how they prevailed upon the Pope to issue the fatal decree

against them, let them read Cretineau Joly's "Clement XIV."

Why did not Mr. Thompson find an argument in favor of the Jesuits in their restoration by Pius VII? If they were guilty because suppressed, is it not just as reasonable to argue that they were innocent because restored? What evidence of their guilt can be inferred, from the fact that they were expelled from several Catholic countries? Were they not afterwards restored? By whom were they expelled?

The characters of Pombal and Choiseul, and Aranda, the intrigues by which they succeeded in poisoning the minds of their respective Sovereigns against the Jesuits; the nefarious means they used to create public opinion against them, all those things are now well known.

Every student of history knows the reason why the Jesuits of France encountered the unrelenting hatred of Madame de Pompadour and her court clique. They had to be sacrificed for the same cause that gave John the Baptist's head to Herodias. They would not consent to close their eyes and compound with the vices of court favorites, and so they must be expelled.

But if they were expelled in passion, they were recalled after cool, deliberate reflection. If they were rejected by impious and profligate Ministers of

State, they were called back by the people, who knew their merits and could appreciate their services.

Mr. Thompson seems to approve especially the recent expulsion from Prussia, of the Jesuits, and all other religious societies said to be affiliated with them, under the pretext that their attitude was dangerous to the State. But what proof was ever given to sustain this accusation? When their enemies were challenged again and again, in the Reichsrath, to allege one single fact in proof of it, or one single fact against their moral character as priests or as citizens, is it not well known that neither Bismarck nor any of his tools dared to take up the challenge? That they could not point to a single crime, or even to a single indiscretion? Nay, is it not a notorious commentary on the injustice of the Prussian persecutors, that, unlike Mr. Thompson's friends, they had not the courage even to invent a lie to sustain their sweeping accusations?

It is too evident that Mr. Thompson wrote his book for the purpose of exciting the worst prejudices of those, for whom he wrote it, and with the design of encouraging the public men of this country to imitate the unjust and unchristian policy of Bismarck and other persecutors of the Jesuits and the Church. But never will I consider a man in this Republic to be a true American, if he can sympathize with the

despot Bismarck ; because bigotry controls that man's actions, not the sense of republican freedom.

For this strong reason I have thought myself bound to warn the public, that they cannot trust Mr. Thompson. He makes accusations which he cannot substantiate. He seeks to discredit the loyalty of the Jesuits in this country ; though he does not pretend to specify a single instance of their disloyalty. If he knows of one, I challenge him to produce it.

The Jesuits preached the Gospel of Peace to the Indians, and gave their labor and their lives to the work of civilizing them, two centuries before the United States were formed. The pages of Bancroft and Parkman bear eloquent testimony to the labors of the Jesuits in the early settlements of our country, and the invaluable services in behalf of religion, civilization and science of such heroes as Jogues, Brebœuf, Charlevoix, Marquette, and many others. Jesuits were the trusted advisers of the Maryland Catholics, who first on these shores unfurled the standard of religious liberty. Their hearty allegiance to lawful authority has never been impeached. Their record as citizens of the United States is unstained by a single act of treason or disloyalty. During the late Civil War they gave their services freely in the cause of humanity, on the battle-field and in the hospital ; and unlike the ministers of

many Protestant sects, they carefully **abstained** from all political agitation. Mr. Thompson should blush with shame at the unjust and ungenerous imputations he casts upon a body of men, whose good deeds and noble conduct have won the praise of his more fair-minded countrymen.

Or does persecution form a just ground of condemnation? Were the early Christians guilty of the abominable crimes laid to their charge, because they were banished, or tortured, or slain? Were the Apostles vile criminals because they were accused of impiety and treason to the Gods and the tyrants of the empire? Was Christ Himself guilty of loose principles concerning the Sabbath and other things, and of seducing the people, and of treason to Cæsar; because false witnesses were found to repeat the lies of the Pharisees and leaders of the people? Did not Christ foretell that persecution and calumny should be the lot of those who would love justice and follow Him?

The prophecy of Christ is a subject of consolation to those who are conscious, that they suffer persecution for justice' sake, and that they are accused as He was, of being dangerous to the State; but it is far from justifying those who use the weapons of calumny and prejudice, to invite or to encourage persecu-

tion. The *role* of religious persecutor is peculiarly unsuited to an American citizen.

The protection which **all** Christians have a right to claim, in **America**, is not a matter of princely condescension, or of party favor ; it is a fundamental principle of the American Constitution, and an integral part of the organic law.

“Congress,” says the Constitution, “shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” And James Madison, officially declaring the purposes for which our government was formed, enumerated among them the duty “to avoid the *slightest* interference with the rights of conscience, or the functions of religion, so wisely exempted from civil jurisdiction.”

To contract this broad principle of religious liberty, to infringe upon the rights of individual conscience, to interfere with the religious practices of any Church founded upon Christian revelation and Christian morality, is a violation of the Constitution ; and *whoever is guilty of it, violates the fundamental law of the country.*

Since the establishment of the United States Government, no Jesuit has ever been guilty of such an act of disloyalty.

I myself am a Jesuit, and, at the same time a citizen of the United States, and I yield to no man in

the ardent desire to see our great country united in the bonds of a loving brotherhood, and prosperous before God and man. I have lived here, not thirteen years, as Mr. Thompson gives you to understand, but nearly *thirty* years—since July, 1848.

Throughout all this time I have proved my loyalty to the country far better than Mr. Thompson himself; especially at the time of the civil war. Giving my missions uninterruptedly, I taught all my hearers, who were thousands and thousands, in the cities and through the country, their duty to sustain the Union even with their blood. And my reason for doing so was, that when I became a citizen I took an oath to be a citizen of the United, and not of the Dis-United States; and I wished to keep my oath.

For this reason I never could sympathize with "Secession," for I could never persuade myself, that, when forming the United States, Americans had acted like men, who would agree to build a house, with the condition that each one of the contracting parties should be permitted to remove his share of the bricks from its walls, whenever he pleased, even though the house must then tumble, and bury the other parties in its ruins. They might agree that every contracting party should manage his own apartments under the same roof, as he might judge proper, but never so as to destroy the whole.

If ever there was any ambiguity in this regard, the treaties of the United States with foreign powers prove that the doubt practically was settled; because they treated with other powers as United States, and did not ask for the ratification by every State Capitol. As an instance, I may allude to the Treaty with Japan, just before the outbreak of the civil war.

Moreover, the Constitution forbids the States as such, to enter into any treaty with another power.

Now, how did Mr. Thompson testify his loyalty to the Constitution? Americans! I say to you, those men are the most disloyal and the most dangerous to your free institutions, who, with sectarian animosity, try to disunite the members of the Republic, contemptuously calling citizens not native born, "foreigners," and striving to deprive them of their equal rights. One of them is Mr. Thompson.

Of course, Thompson and Company most solemnly assure the world that the Catholic Church may enjoy, according to our Constitution, her freedom in this country. But a Catholic Church, severed from its head—a Schismatic Catholic—a Russian Catholic Church, with all the exterior pomp of Ceremonial, Mass and Sacraments, Feasts and Fasts, but not a Roman Catholic Church.

A Catholic Church which admits in the civil power the right to control her in her own sphere, a Bis-

marck Catholic Church, with the right of the State to lock at pleasure the lips of the priests, when preaching from the pulpit the Word of God.

We advise Mr. Thompson to send his book to the Czar Alexander III, and to Frederick William, Emperor of Germany, he may expect from them, as a token of their sympathy, the orders of St. Andrew and of the Black Eagle.

From clear-minded, self-thinking, patriotic Americans, he can not expect anything but the *decoration* of their contempt.

As long as American hearts will beat in American bosoms, and the blood of their Fathers shall flow in their veins, such efforts as Thompson's shall not succeed. True, genuine Americans will protect the Catholic Church in this country, and will finally join it.

Here we stop. We have fulfilled the promise made in the Introduction; to break the point of every lance aimed at us and our books, and crush to naught, at the same time, the whole argument of Mr. Thompson's book.

We leave the volume, whose argument we have killed, as a carcass to be devoured by those Texan buzzards—those stinking birds—we mean that kind of men, who love to feed on corruption, calumnies and lies, and are attracted by the stench of them.

We have handled our adversary throughout the whole discourse without gloves, and used rather plain language, but he compelled us to do so by his lack of all literary decorum and controvesial courtesy, using the most abusive language, so that his book may be ranked with those of the fanatical founders of Protestantism.

Considering his mental disposition, we would not have replied to his book at all, it was only done from our regard for the American public.

Concerning this mental disposition of Mr. Thompson, see what he himself says in his Preface.

"*Evidence* is but of little value unless it satisfies our mind and heart"—*Sic*?! That is to say, prove the truths you defend, as clearly as the sun shines in the heavens, if these truths do not agree with my views, I disregard such evidence. You may point to the sun, but I will look with my eyes closed and will most positively answer you, I see no sun.

On the other hand, he says Preface page 6 :

"There are many things entitled to be recognized *without* proof. Every thing which partakes of the nature of a public act, general laws and customs, matters which concern a whole people, or the government of a country, are all of this character." —*Sic*?!.

Americans! did you ever in your lives hear declarations more irrational? Can a man, capable of

such absurd utterances, be considered a fit adviser of the Executive?

Indeed, had it not been in consideration of the American people, I would have left the author in the midst of his Newfoundland fog.

The President, nevertheless, has selected him for the office of Secretary of the Navy. Perhaps he perceived the rare boldness with which Mr. Thompson has dared to launch out in his small canoe of theological learning into the ocean of polemical discussion, rashly confident that in spite of the many breakers of logical acumen, surrounding him, he nevertheless could safely land.

We thank the President that he has not made of him the Attorney General. The President would gratify the country more yet, if he would be pleased to appoint Mr. Thompson to a Polar Expedition. It would be easier for him to steer amid the Icebergs of the Northern Seas, than amid the misquotations and fallacies of his book, and he might hope to be more fortunate against monsters in the Polar Sea than against Popes and Jesuits on "terra firma." And now, before concluding, I wish to address Mr. Thompson a few words, which probably he never expected to hear from me.

I say: the severe but well-merited rebuke contained in this reply is not directed to him, but to the

real author of the book, for it is evident to every critic, that Mr. Thompson did not write the book himself but only adopted it.

My reason for this is grounded :

First.—On the declaration of Mr. Thompson himself, when he says in his Preface, that he never possessed any theological training, and possessed only a small library—and made no use of any book out of it.

Now, who can open the book without finding Mr. Thompson guilty of the most culpable recklessness, speaking on such subjects, without having thoroughly studied Divinity, History and the Canons ?

Secondly.—We have too much regard for our President to suppose, that he would have chosen as one of his advisers a man, of whose integrity and honesty he was not personally convinced. Therefore, we feel satisfied, to look to Mr. Thompson as to an honest man ; and would feel saddened if, by re-affirming the authorship of that book, he would compel us to think of him in another way.

Considering the whole event, I rather thank Mr. Thompson for the opportunity he has given me, to address my countrymen and call their attention to the books I have written for them, and which they can, if they choose, examine themselves.

If they do this in earnest and with the desire to

find the truth they will find it, and Mr. Thompson will discover that he has quite missed his aim, but has rather inaugurated in favor of the persecuted ranks, a success which he was far from anticipating.

THE AUTHOR.

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